

naturalistic novels. instead i'll re-read
gatsby, which will remind me that money
is shit and that those who love it are shitless.
and up my sleeve i'll keep the lever mind.

-- Gerald Locklin

Long Beach, California

Hyde

Pity the poor doctor who died of lust.
He never dreamed it possible that he
would ever suffer for such pleasure.
The good in him melted like chocolate.
Now widowed, whores cry over Hyde.
Charcoal smolders like a dream of war
inside his cheap, city-bought coffin.

Well and good. Murder can still happen
in the drawing rooms of manors
where butlers peep through keyholes. It still
stands around, hands in its pockets,
waiting in the stink of back alleys.
Nothing died with Hyde. The Dr. Jekylls
still mourn the boiling in their groins.

The cities remain lit until dawn,
factories busy machining fear.
Dogs howl and creep into our hearts
and we dream of running the bitch down.
We laugh to watch the ancient movie
but Hyde is in a corner of our bed and
there sleeps all the heat of our engines.

On His Twenty-First Birthday

The years have seemed too long to be.
My father talks about time lengthening
as if it were a football game
and could be called for darkness.
He told me to enjoy things discreetly
before I'm old enough to be caught.

Soon enough, he says, soon enough
the stars will click their heels and bow
and bend me backward like a birch.
Broken down by several years
of struggling with my poems I see
(like a wise thief sees money sealed

in a secret pocketbook) bones
forgotten where they fell in the leaves,
still rattling for their release.
Two hundred bones to every man,
they say, two hundred bones buried
in the immensity of his flesh.

One day they burst free and take control
and the aches and complaints begin.
The body swells like bread. Then comes
the real thing. Ventricles raise their voice.
Slogans spill like pebbles from a tide,
tossing and tinkling in the brain.

Then lovers and generals sink
into a suck of thirsty sand,
too stubborn to toss their steel boots
away. Then those who stood on shore
are tied to the wind to wait for gulls
to open their viscera to fire.

Even the poets and drinkers
go bad in the heart and soon stink.
But later, like natural gas
escaped from the earth, their ghosts
loll in sacred groves, nightmares
musty with fog and ragged sheets.

Everyone had something to say to me.
Everyone had giftwrapped advice.
They knew the score, they said. They knew
the score like a drunken umpire
whose grandiose word still rings
with a twist of authority.

This is the way things really are,
they said. But perverse as a child
I shook my belly like a wand
with laughter and willed things new again
as a king does. leaving wisdom
puzzling over the shape of my poem.

-- William Doreski

Boston, Massachusetts

Lit Notes:::
The April, 1970 issue of The Quarterly Journal relates
poets and poetry with the Library of Congress, \$1 fm.
Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Govt. Printing Office,
Washington, D.C. 20402. ¶ David Sonstroem's Rossetti and
the Fair Lady, \$11 fm. Wesleyan Univ. Press, Middletown,
Conn. 06457 is great for Victorian art & lit buffs.